

Appl. No. 09/584,676
Atty. Docket No. 7897R
Reply to Office Action of December 18, 2003
Customer No. 27752

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (withdrawn): A method for forming a laminate web comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing first and second web materials comprising thermoplastic material;
- (b) providing at least one third web material;
- (c) providing a thermal point bonder having a plurality of protuberances;
- (d) guiding said third web material between said first and second web materials in a face-to-face layered relationship to said thermal point bonder;
- (e) displacing said third web material with said protuberances at discrete, spaced apart locations to form apertures in said third material; and
- (f) thermally point bonding said first and second outer web materials to form bond sites at discrete, spaced apart locations corresponding to said protuberances, thereby forming a bonded laminate.

Claim 11 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 10, wherein said third web material is provided in an unapertured condition.

Claim 12 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 10, wherein said third web material is involved in said thermal point bonding about a perimeter of a said bond sites.

Claim 13 (withdrawn): A method for forming an apertured laminate web comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing first and second web materials comprising thermoplastic material;
- (b) providing at least one third web material;
- (c) providing a thermal point bonder having a plurality of protuberances;
- (d) providing a stretching means;
- (e) guiding said third web material between said first and second web materials in a face-to-face layered relationship to said thermal point bonder;

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- (f) displacing said third web material with said protuberances at discrete, spaced apart locations to form apertures in said third material;
- (g) thermally point bonding said first and second outer web materials at discrete, spaced apart locations corresponding to said protuberances, thereby forming a bonded laminate; and
- (g) stretching said bonded laminate to form the apertured laminate web.

Claim 14 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 13, wherein said first and second web materials comprise nonwoven fibers.

Claim 15 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 13, wherein said third web material has an elongation to break which is less than both of said first or second web materials.

Claim 16 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 13, wherein said third web material has an elongation to break which is greater than both of said first or second web materials.

Claim 17 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 13, wherein said thermal point bonder comprises a patterned calendar roller.

Claim 18 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 13, wherein said stretching means comprises incremental stretching.

Claim 19 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 13, wherein said protuberances of said thermal point bonder have an aspect ratio of between about 3 and 20.

Claim 20 (withdrawn): The method of Claim 13, wherein said protuberances of said thermal point bonder have an aspect ratio of 10.

Claim 21 (currently amended): A laminate web comprising:

- (a) a first prebonded web;
- (b) a second prebonded web joined to said first prebonded web in a face to face relationship at a plurality of discrete bond sites each having an aspect ratio of greater than about 3, the first and second prebonded webs forming an interior region therebetween; and
- (c) a third material being disposed between at least a portion of said first and second prebonded webs, said third material being apertured in regions adjacent said discrete

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bond sites, such that said first and second prebonded webs are joined through said apertures,
wherein said laminate web has distinct regions being differentiated by at least one property selected from the group consisting of basis weight, fiber orientation, thickness, and density.

Claim 22 (canceled)

Claim 23 (currently amended): An apertured laminate web comprising:

- (a) a first prebonded web;
- (b) a second prebonded web joined to said first prebonded web in a face to face relationship at a plurality of discrete bond sites each having a longitudinal axis and an aspect ratio greater than about 3, the first and second prebonded webs forming an interior region therebetween; and
- (c) a third material being disposed between at least a portion of said first and second prebonded webs, said third material being apertured in regions adjacent said discrete bond sites, such that said first and second prebonded webs are joined through said apertures; wherein said first and second prebonded webs of said laminate web are apertured at said discrete bond sites by extending said laminate web in a direction orthogonal to said longitudinal axis of said discrete bond site,
wherein said apertured laminate web has distinct regions being differentiated by at least one property selected from the group consisting of basis weight, fiber orientation, thickness, and density.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The laminate web of Claim 21 wherein said first or second prebonded web comprises a nonwoven.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The laminate web of Claim 24 wherein said first and second prebonded webs are identical.

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Claim 26 (previously presented): The laminate web of Claim 21 wherein said aspect ratio is from about 4 to about 20.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The laminate web of Claim 26 wherein said aspect ratio is about 10.

Claim 28 (previously presented): The apertured laminate web of Claim 23 wherein said first or second prebonded web comprises a nonwoven.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The apertured laminate web of Claim 28 wherein said first and second prebonded webs are identical.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The apertured laminate web of Claim 23 wherein said aspect ratio is from about 4 to about 20.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The apertured laminate web of Claim 30 wherein said aspect ratio is about 10.